



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 19, 2003

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BLACKOUT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR BUSINESS DISASTER PLANS ***County Office of Trade & Business Development Offers Info to Small Business Owners***

No one knows when a disaster will strike. That's why planning ahead is vitally important for small businesses. The lesson was driven home last week by the massive power outage in the Northeastern United States and Canada.

"Having a business contingency plan could be the difference between a successful restoration and bankruptcy for many companies," said Chairman Greg Cox of the County Board of Supervisors.

The County of San Diego's Office of Trade and Business Development wants to help local businesses prepare their own plans for coping with an emergency, and bouncing back to full productivity once the initial crisis has passed. The department has information on its Web site, <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/cntydepts/landuse/ombuds/>, and a free notebook that outlines the planning process. Statistics show that as many as 80 percent of businesses without a disaster recovery plan fail within 13 months of a major disaster.

Business disaster planning includes looking at all aspects of a company's operations, from finance, to supply, to computers and other equipment. The purpose is to outline alternative methods and sources so that a business can keep operating when a disaster occurs, or smoothly resume operations in the aftermath of a disaster. Businesses also are urged to test their plans, so employees know what to do in an emergency, and so weaknesses in the disaster plan can be identified and corrected.

Trade and Business is also planning an additional session of its free seminar on business disaster planning, which has been offered to local small business owners in recent months. Please contact the office at (858) 495-5494 for more information.

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